

Debating the right way to confront Russian threats to America and our allies and equip our friends in Ukraine is certainly worth the Senate's time. Putin is massing tens of thousands of troops on Ukraine's border, but the Democratic leader is trying to block a debate about responding to Russian aggression? It makes no sense.

Considering sanctions on the pipeline that fuels Putin's encroachment over Europe—including provisions from Senator Risch that closely mirror language that the House added unanimously—is certainly worth the Senate's time. Setting the record straight on our resolve to maintain a strong and credible nuclear deterrent that can check the worst impulses of our adversaries is also worth the Senate's time.

Yet, once again, the Democratic leader seems to want to put national security last. My colleague is trying to overcorrect for poor planning by cramming a 2-week bill into 2 or 3 days' time. I imagine there might be finger-pointing at the Republicans if that proves impossible.

So nothing less than the safety of the American people is at stake. This is more important than political time-tables or partisan wish lists. So if the Democratic leader insists on forcing a cloture vote later today, I will oppose cutting off these important debates prematurely when they have really just begun.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now on a related matter, why do our Democratic colleagues want to short-change our national defense? Well, to free up their time and attention for another massive, reckless taxing-and-spending spree, a radical wish list that would hurt American families and help China.

Working families are already getting slammed by runaway costs because the Democrats' last massive spending spree drove up inflation. Gas prices are up about 50 percent, used car prices are up more than 25 percent, and grocery prices across practically every category are up significantly over this time last year.

But, in response, Washington Democrats want to print, borrow, and spend trillions more. Even if you accept all their budget gimmicks at face value, this bill alone would unleash \$800 billion in not-paid-for spending in the next 5 years. Years 5 through 10 are when their crushing tax hikes and phony accounting would actually begin to kick in. But even then the bill is not paid for.

President Biden promised Americans over and over that this legislation would cost zero dollars. Obviously, that is false. The Congressional Budget Office says that after 10 years, after their tax hikes and fake offsets are factored in, their spree would still add up to \$367 billion and add that all to the deficit.

President Biden said the deficit impact would be zero. In reality, it is

hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars.

President Biden promised Americans something else too. He said he would never raise taxes on the middle class. People earning less than \$400,000 per year were not to pay a penny more. He has completely broken this promise as well.

Among the \$1.5 trillion in job-killing tax increases are new burdens for small businesses, family farms, and direct hikes on middle-class families earning less than six figures. Meanwhile, amazingly, Democrats did find room in their plan to include \$300 billion in tax cuts for the wealthiest blue-State ZIP codes in New York and California. Our colleagues want to pretend they are launching another New Deal. Yet one of the biggest components is a direct cash giveaway to their richest constituents.

So the cost of this spending spree would be astronomical, and the massive tax hikes that would only partly pay for it would literally crush an already fragile economy.

Well, what about the content of the liberal wish list? If Democrats get to steal the American people's credit card for this historic spending spree, what would our citizens even get to unwrap?

Well, there would be massive government giveaways to supposedly green initiatives, giving rise to a whole new generation of waste and abuse like Solyndra.

There would be a gigantic slush fund so that HHS Secretary Becerra, the culture warrior who sued Catholic nuns, could take over daycare and pre-kindergarten across America. He would be in charge of subsidizing certain kinds of private family choices but not others and tilting the playing field against faith-based childcare.

There would be a continuation of inflationary welfare payments that Washington is sending out with zero work requirements whatsoever, and illegal immigrants would get the money as well. Oh, and, as we speak, Senate Democrats are still trying desperately behind the scenes to get sweeping amnesty included in the bill as well.

So it goes on and on like this, a hodgepodge catalog that is built to satisfy the demands of activists, not the needs of families. If you ask any working-class or middle-class American family for their top concerns, you aren't going to hear many people pinning for massive tax hikes, electric car charging stations, and woke bureaucrats getting control of their kids' early childhoods.

My colleagues across the aisle seem determined to spend the weeks ahead on ways to waste Americans' money while making Americans' problems even worse. So let's hope enough of our Democratic colleagues step back, take stock, do the responsible thing, and kill this bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4350, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4350) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reed/Inhofe modified amendment No. 3867, in the nature of a substitute.

Reed amendment No. 4775 (to amendment No. 3867), to modify effective dates relating to the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration and the Service Acquisition Executive of the Department of the Air Force for Space Systems and Programs.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HUNTER BIDEN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, today I am going to highlight a new Hunter Biden record that I have recently made public.

Before I get to that point, I am going to take a trip down memory lane—yes, down memory lane.

On September 23, 2020, Senator JOHN-SON and I released our "Biden Report," as it has been called. That report focused on questionable financial transactions between the Biden family and foreign, government-linked individuals.

On November 18, 2020, we released a supplemental to that report. I am going to read several statements from the media and my Democratic colleagues about our report.

So, to start with, on September 23, 2020, a New York Times article by Nicholas Fandos described it in two ways: "lack of meaningful new information" and "overlap with a Russian disinformation campaign."

And the then-Democratic minority leader was quoted in the same article